



Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Update

So far this HABs monitoring season, there have been a number of blooms with high concentrations of microcystin toxin dominated by *Microcystis* cyanobacteria in the northern end of the lake. Specifically, 10 blooms have been observed with toxin levels that exceed all safe guidance values for water set by the Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Health. Compared to previous years, such high toxin blooms have not occurred this early in the season; in 2018, there were no high toxin blooms in July, and in 2019 there was only one.



Bloom 20-3458-B8, located along multiple waterfront properties on Water St. in the village of Cayuga.

Beyond Cayuga Lake, the first HABs of the summer have recently been reported on other Finger Lakes such as Owasco, Conesus, Honeoye, and Hemlock. Yet Seneca, Cayuga's most similar neighboring lake, has not observed any HABs this season thus far. The Community Science Institute (CSI) continues to collect data on Cayuga Lake water quality each monitoring season to better understand patterns of freshwater HAB occurrences to most effectively raise awareness and inform the public.

Through public outreach, CLWN works with CSI to support their water quality research. Below is a partial chart showing the reported blooms from July 28th to August 4th. To get the latest update, visit CSI's [Cayuga Lake HABs Reporting Page](#), which also provides a map visualizing where the blooms are located.

Bloom Sample Code	Date Sampled	Location Description	Bloom Extent	Microscopy	Microcystin Toxin (µg/L)
20-3459-B1	7/28/2020	Near the shoreline of Springport Cove Rd. in Union Springs.	Small localized	Dense Microcystis, moderate to sparse Planktothrix, and sparse Pseudoanabaena	> 500.00
20-3458-B8	7/30/2020	Along multiple waterfront properties on Water St. in the village of Cayuga.	Large localized	Dense Microcystis	> 1000.00
20-3459-B2	7/30/2020	Along multiple waterfront properties near Hibiscus Point in Union Springs.	Large localized	Moderate to dense Microcystis	> 100.00
20-3469-B2	7/31/2020	Along the shoreline of Cayuga Lake State Park.	Large localized	Results pending	4.30
20-3475-B1	8/3/2020	Along the shoreline of John Harris Park in the Village of Cayuga.	Small localized	Results pending	Results pending
20-3458-B9	8/3/2020	Across multiple properties along the shoreline of Water St. in the Village of Cayuga.	Large localized	Results pending	Results pending

Quadrant Leaders

The Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program depends on trained volunteers, or HABs Harriers, to monitor designated shorelines weekly to report and collect samples of suspicious HABs. To make the process most efficient, the program assigns four Quadrant Leaders to the northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast sections of the lake to support the HABs Harriers in their region and to better coordinate across the entire lake. Roles of Quadrant Leaders include helping to provide new sampling kits, transporting bloom samples to the CSI lab, and overseeing the HABs hotline of reported suspicious blooms by the general public. Thank you HABs Harriers and Quadrant Leaders for making the HABs Monitoring Program a community-based effort that effectively manages HABs across Cayuga Lake! Below are the Quadrant Leaders of 2020 and their contact information.

Northwest Quadrant Leader

Bill Ebert – wsebert@yahoo.com

Northeast Quadrant Leader

Christy VanArnum – christyvanarnum95@yahoo.com

Southwest Quadrant Leader

John Abel – jfa5@cornell.edu

Southeast Quadrant Leader

Glenn Ratajczak – gratajczak@boltonpoint.org

HABs Information and Reporting Guide Brochures



With the help of volunteers around the lake, CSI has installed brochure holders at all four New York State Parks around the lake as well as at Harris Park in the Village of Cayuga (pictured above) and East Shore Park in Ithaca. The brochure serves as a valuable resource for lake-goers and visitors of Cayuga Lake by defining HABs, describing how to identify and report a suspicious bloom, and providing

resources for any health concerns regarding contact with a HAB. There is also an [electronic version](#) of the brochure that can be found on CSI's website under the resources section of the [Cayuga Lake Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring Program information page](#).

Check Out the Upcoming Biomonitoring Event!



Date: Thursday, August 6th

Time: 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Location: Upper Treman State Park

CSI's 4-H2O Education Program enables children to explore the world of science and environmental stewardship through hands-on activities. At the upcoming biomonitoring event, participants will have the opportunity to collect samples of organisms at Enfield Creek in Upper Treman State Park that will then be used to evaluate the water quality and health of the ecosystem. To learn more and to register for the program, visit [CSI's website!](#)

Reporting a HAB

If you observe a suspicious HAB, avoid it and report it! Email habshotline@gmail.com with the location of the bloom, the date and time, and two pictures. If possible, include the GPS coordinates of its location using the Compass app or Google Maps on smartphones. Otherwise, an address or nearby landmark will do the job! You may also call CSI at (607) 257-6606.

Stay Informed!

Before heading on the lake, you can view the interactive map on CSI's [Cayuga Lake HABs Reporting Page](#) that is regularly updated. The DEC provides a similar interactive map of current HABs across New York State that you can view [here](#). You may also call your local park office on the most up-to-date water quality information (see below).

Taughannock Falls State Park

(607) 387-6739

Cayuga Lake State Park

(315) 568-5163

Long Point State Park

(315) 364- 5637 or (315) 497-0130

Lansing Myers Park

(607) 533-7388 ext. 17

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The Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program is a collaborative effort led by a local consortium of three nonprofits: the Community Science Institute (CSI), the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN), and Discover Cayuga Lake (DCL), working in collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the State University of New York Environmental School of Forestry (SUNY-ESF).

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
programs@cayugalake.org
607-319-0475

Community Science Institute
info@communityscience.org
607-257-6606

Discover Cayuga Lake
(607) 327-5253